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General Notes.

GEOGRAPHY AND TRAVELS.

The Peary North Greenland Expedition.—This expedition, together with the relief expedition, both sent out by the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, has returned safely. They stopped at St. Johns, Newfoundland, and we derive the following report of their proceedings from letters sent to the *Record* and *Ledger* by Lieut. Peary and Mr. Meehan of the expedition,and from information subsequently obtained by ourselves.

Lieut. Peary has carried out his plans fully and made an inland ice journey of 1300 miles with Mr. Astrupp, and, through the members of his party who remained at McCormick Bay, has made a rich collection of the flora, fauna and ethnology of North Greenland, besides which he has demonstrated the ease and comfort with which a winter can be spent in the Arctic regions. The Relief Expedition has been equally fortunate. Not an essential plan projected by Professor Heilprin has miscarried, and many things have been accomplished not considered feasible before sailing. Throughout the voyage no serious mishaps occurred, and the collections made are probably unprecedented, even by many Northern expeditions remaining for a longer period of time. It made an almost complete collection of water and land mammals, both in skins and skeletons; a large variety of birds and submarine animal life, a collection of flowering plants, mosses, lichens and insects, and of ethnological specimens, which is probably only excelled by that in the museum at Copenhagen. This includes tents, costumes, sledges and dogs of the northern Esquimaux. The party has also secured meteorological and tidal observations, and a large number of photographs of natives, dwellings and arctic scenery.

Peary discovered what he went after—the northern boundary of the main mass of Greenland. The details of his journey are awaited with great interest.

The expedition was a success, among Lieutenant Peary's discoveries being one of a great bay, latitude 81.37, longitude 24, opening out east and northeast, which he named Independence Bay, in honor of the day, July 4; and the great glacier flowing north into it, Academy Glacier, in honor of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, which sent out the expedition.

He succeeded in exploring the great fiords and glaciers emptying into Kane and Hall basins and Robeson channel, and Whale and Inglefield Sounds.

The record of the Peary party from the date of arrival in McCormick's Bay to its leader's return from the inland ice is a pleasant one. The winter quarters were completed soon after the Kite left last year, and named Red Cliff House, from the color of the rocks and Cape Cleveland. Numerous expeditions were made during the autumn to secure fresh meat for winter use. During one of these in August a family of Eskimos was induced to remove to Red Cliff House, and this family subsequently brought several others. These proved valuable aids to the Peary party in carrying out their plans. Mr. Peary's leg, which was broken last year, meanwhile improved rapidly, and by September 29 he was able to abandon crutches. During early autumn two reconnoissances of the inland ice were made, the first on September 7, by Astrupp, Gibson and Verhoeff, occupying five days, and the second on September 23, by Astrupp and Gibson, of seven days duration. The hunting expeditions, which lasted until November 8, when winter regularly set in, were eminently successful, no less than 53 reindeer having been secured, the skins of which were made into garments and sleeping bags. The long winter night was occupied in making sledges and other articles. Although the weather was very cold, the lowest temperature being minus 53 degrees, the party had no difficulty in keeping warm. When spring opened they had more than one ton of coal remaining of the seven tons left them, besides a large quantity of kerosene. The health of the members also was excellent, except during a short period, when Mr. and Mrs. Peary suffered from the grippe.

The sun showed itself on February 15th, and almost immediately provisions were gradually taken to the head of the bay, 15 miles distant, for the ice journey. On April 29th the work of transporting these to the edge of the inland ice began, Mr. and Mrs. Peary, with a few Eskimos, in the meantime taking a short boat journey to Inglefield Gulf to survey it.

On May 8th the ice journey began, the party comprising Peary, Astrupp, Gibson and Cooke—Henson and Verhoeff remaining behind with Mrs. Peary, the first on account of a frozen heel and the second to attend to meteorological work in which he had become greatly interested. At the start seven sledges of different patterns were taken, but three of these were soon found unavailable and dropped. Twenty Eskimo dogs were also taken, but five of these had died by the time the party had gone 30 miles beyond the basin of the Humboldt glacier, which was reached on May 21st. At this point Mr. Peary selected Astrupp as his companion, took three of the sledges and 13 dogs and continued the journey, Cook and Gibson returning with one sledge and two dogs, arriving at the Red Cliffe House early on the morning of June 3d. After leaving Cook and Gibson, Peary and Astrupp pursued a northeast course, following along the Humboldt glacier, Peterman and Sherard Osborn Fiords, and succeeded in determining the northern boundary of the main land mass of Greenland.

Soon after the commencement of the journey two of the three sledges were discarded, and before its completion eight of the thirteen dogs died. The sledge which was used during the entire journey was ten feet long, sixteen inches wide and weighed thirteen pounds, and sustained without breaking a weight of 450 pounds. The principle food was pemmican, pea soup, bear's meat, tea and biscuit. No tent was used to harbor them from the winds, and even sleeping bags were after a time discarded, the fur clothing being considered sufficient protection for a greater part of the time. The weather was pleasant, except for the sharp winds, and but little difficulty was found by the two in keeping their course, except during fogs, which closely resembled the ice they were travelling on. They succeeded in making the entire journey in ninety days, the return being made in much shorter time than the forward movement.

Shortly after Mr. Peary's return occurred the only catastrophe of the expedition—the disappearance and possible death of Mr. Verhoeff. He was last seen on August 11, when he intimated his intention of visiting a neighboring settlement, a mineral territory well known to him. Having failed to appear within a reasonable time, fears for his safety were aroused and search was begun for him. In this the Peary party, the Relief Expedition and the crew of the Kite were engaged, besides nine Eskimos, who were stimulated to extra exertion by the offer of rifles and other articles valuable to them. The search, which was continued without intermission for seven days and nights, was so thorough that several small articles lost last spring were found, and finally traces of the missing man. There were footprints leading from the shores of Robertson's Bay up to a dangerous glacier. At its head were found a number of mineralogical specimens placed carefully on a rock, with drippings from a meat can and a piece of string. Besides the heap of minerals, from the evidence discovered there was no doubt in the minds of the searchers that Mr. Verhoeff had been there and had fallen into one of the thousands of dangerous gulches which that glacier possessed, and was killed. Having completely traversed the country that was in any way accessible to Mr. Verhoeff, and convinced themselves of the futility of any further search, the expedition returned to McCormick Bay on the night of August 23, and on the following day started on the homeward journey.

GEOLOGY AND PALEONTOLOGY.

The Elevation of Mount Orizaba or Citlaltepetl.—Citlaltepetl (Star Mountain) is an old volcano situated on the eastern margin of the Mexican table land, about 19° north of the equator and about seventy-five miles from the Gulf. The slopes of the mountain have been known and occupied by man for many centuries, yet from a scientific standpoint they are comparatively unknown.

In July, 1891, a party consisting of Henry E. Seaton, Bloomington, Ind., botanist; A. J. Woolman, South Bend, Ind., icthyologist; W. S. Blatchley, Terre Haute, Ind., entomologist; U. O. Cox, Mankato, Minnesota, ornithologist, and the writer, visited the Star Mountain, making interesting collections of the varied forms of life found on its slopes. The different members of the party will in due time report on the work done in the different departments.

The question of the highest elevation in North America seems to lie between Citlaltepetl in Mexico and St. Elias in Alaska, so that considerable interest centers on the determination of the exact elevation of these mountains.

Different observers vary considerably in their estimates of the elevation of Citlaltepetl; among many the following may be noted:

A. Von Humboldt, 17,375 feet. A Mexican scientific commission, 17,664 feet. Ferrer, 17,879 feet, which is the elevation given by some German geographers. Abmaran, 17,916 feet. Prof. A. Heilprin, 18,205 feet. Dr. Franz Kaska, 18,270 feet.

Prof. Heilprin used an aneroid barometer, adjusted by comparison with a standard mercurial barometer. The elevation of the City of Mexico was determined by railway levels, and the elevation of the summit of the mountain above the City of Mexico was determined by comparing nearly simultaneous barometrical readings, taken one on mountain and one in the city, about 125 miles away. The dis-